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9 June 1954

THE DETERIORATING SITUATION IN SYRIA

I. Government's Ineffectiveness:

- A. Weak coalition, caretaker cabinet;
unable set election date.
- B. Major political parties, though still
in cabinet, pulling apart.

II. Possibility of a Coup as Result of Governmental Weakness:

A. Threat of leftist-military coup:

- 1. Comes from radical socialist Akram
Hawrani and military partisans:
allegedly 300-400 army officers out
of estimated 2000.

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- 2. [REDACTED] says will attempt
coup before elections.

B. Threat of straight military coup.

- 1. Because of army dissatisfaction with
civilian control.

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2. Possible rebels: popular, influential
assistant chief of staff Malki;
hot-headed young Captain Hamdun,
armored brigade commander Amin Abu
Assaf.

III. Outlook:

- A. Immediate successful coup possible but
not probable.
- B. More likely, the situation will continue
to deteriorate, increasing probability
of a coup.

25
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